

Message Text

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70

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4829

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3473

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, GW, IN, CA

SUBJ: HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION PROCESSES

REF: OTTAWA 3443; BONN 16598

1. INFORMATION CONTAINED IN BONN REFTEL PARA 2, A THROUGH E, COINCIDES WITH TECHNICAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO CANADIAN PERSONNEL WHO HAVE WORKED IN INDIA, WITH FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS:

A. NANGAL SUFFERED SEVERE HYDROGEN EXPLOSION SHORTLY AFTER GOING INTO OPERATION AND WAS OUT OF OPERATION FOR AN INDETERMINATE PERIOD CHARACTERIZED AS "MANY MONTHS". SOME CANADIAN PERSONNEL FEEL THAT NANGAL MAY NOT EVEN NOW BE AT FULL PRODUCTION RATE.

B. BARODA IS ALSO KNOWN TO HAVE EXPERIENCED PROBLEMS BUT IN THIS CASE THE PROBLEMS WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THE RELATED AMMONIA PLANT, NOT RPT NOT WITH THE HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION FACILITY.

2. IN REGARD TO LAST PARA BONN REFTEL, CANADIAN TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WERE UNAWARE THAT GERMAN INTEREST IN HYDROGEN-CONFIDENTIAL

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METHYLAMINE PROCESS WAS SERIOUS. IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL IF

COPY OF ARTICLE REFERRED TO COULD BE OBTAINED BY AIR POUCH THROUGH EITHER THE DEPT OR EMBASSY BONN. IN VIEW OF PARA 1 (B & C) OTTAWA REFTTEL, CANADIANS WOULD BE DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE OF ANY INFORMATION WHICH COULD BE SHARED WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT INDIANS ARE, IN FACT, NOW EXPRESSING SERIOUS INTEREST IN HYDROGEN-METHYLAMINE PROCESS IN PREFERENCE TO VARIOUS AMMONIA PROCESSES. THEY ALSO CAUTION THAT AN INTEREST IN HYDROGEN-METHYLAMINE COULD BE SIGNIFICANT TECHNICAL INDICATOR OF SCALE UPON WHICH INDIA MAY BE PLANNING FUTURE NUCLEAR PROGRAMS.

3. WITH FURTHER REFERENCE TO GS PROCESS, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE IS DEFINITELY A TECHNOLOGICAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN BUILDING AND OPERATING A 100 OR 200-TON GS PLANT AND THE 700-TON MONSTERS BEING BUILT IN CANADA. DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION CALCULATIONS FOR THE SMALLER PLANTS DO NOT RPT NOT EXTRAPOLATE WITH FULL ACCURACY TO THE LARGER PLANTS. HENCE, THERE IS A DISTINCT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROVIDING GS CONSULTING SERVICES FOR SMALLER AND MAJOR PLANTS. PORTER

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